

ADVICE

Minor detail

A 39-year-old lesbian goes fishing for jailbait

DEAR MS. BEHAVIOR:

Is 17 too young?
I'm a 39-year-old professional female who's fallen in love with a young woman in the neighborhood. She's mature, fun, smart and bi-curious.

I think she's interested in a sexual experience; she comes by every evening after dinner and hangs out on my porch with me. Sometimes she does homework, sometimes we just talk.

I know this seems bizarre. I've had many lesbian relationships (my longest was a recently ended 10-year marriage), so I'm not suggesting a life with Angie would be easy, not to mention possible.

But is there any harm in being her first lesbian love? I care about her very much, would take things slowly, would keep her safe and would show her the beauty of lesbian love.

I haven't told anyone about my feelings for Angie. I guess I'm embarrassed.

But if she kept it secret, she might turn out to be my most exciting and fulfilling love ever. Should I deflower or not deflower?

—Aching

DEAR ACHING:

Ms. Behavior appreciates the allure of a taut, nubile, 17-year-old body as much as the next dyke.

But are you calling your teen-age attraction "love" just to avoid feeling like a predator? And if you're so enthralled with "the beauty of lesbian love," why insist on secrecy?

Your belief that this teen-ager might be your "most exciting and fulfilling love ever" suggests you have some issues to work out. Topics to explore in therapy: Am I afraid to be with a grown-up? Does a sexual connection feel purer and less threatening with someone who seems innocent (i.e., a child)? Am I willing to appreciate *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Britney Spears* and *Dawson's Creek*? You'll feel old when you realize Angie's peers missed Kennedy's assassination by two decades—and worse when it dawns on you that they weren't even born when Reagan was shot.

You won't have any shared cultural references. Angie was in diapers when *Desert Hearts* premiered. She won't know our foremothers, like Rita Mae Brown, Cris Williamson, Billie Jean King and Audre Lorde (not to mention unconfirmed suspicions, like Alice the housekeeper from *The Brady Bunch*). And unless Angie takes women's studies (when she runs off to Smith College to become an educated lesbian), she'll surmise that "Sappho Was a Right-On Woman" refers to ancient Greek mythology.

She might not be able to celebrate your 40th birthday with you; what if

it falls when she has midterms, SATs or driver's ed? And when you go out to dinner together, will Angie spend her baby-sitting money, or will you give her an allowance?

DEAR MS. BEHAVIOR:

Can you give me 10 good reasons to come out at work?

I'm happy in my top position at a large global bank. I'm well

liked and well paid.

It just would complicate matters to unmask my queerness, which never comes up in the course of daily business anyway. Besides, how would I do it?

My friends say I'm a chicken and a closet queen. What do you say?

—Secure at the Bank

DEAR SECURE AT THE BANK:

Your signature is interesting, because security is really only possible when you tell the truth.

One good reason should be enough incentive for you to come out. However, Ms. Behavior decided to indulge your request and offer you 10 reasons:

1. The well-meaning human resources director will stop offering to introduce you to her homely niece.
2. You'll enlighten a few heteros; many straight people think they don't know anyone gay except maybe Liberace, whom they prefer to think of as merely flashy.
3. At company picnics, no one will expect you to be good at softball.
4. Because you are well liked and well paid, you'll be a fabulous role model for queer fledgling bankers. (Just don't dress like a geek.)
5. Female colleagues will ask your advice about dating and fashion and confide their darkest, most shocking secrets.
6. Straight co-workers concerned with seeming cool will arrange blind dates for you. (Be wary of being fixed up with the only other homo your co-worker knows; you might have nothing more in common than a pulse and a penis.)
7. No one at work ever will ask you to help move their furniture.
8. You won't have to suffer the embarrassment of rejecting romantic or sexual advances from female co-workers.
9. Your new friends will invite you out to have facials and manicures during lunch.
10. Everyone already knows anyway. Even if you think they don't.

As for how to come out, wait for the next company party and suggest a game of "Pin the Tail on the Poofster." Then stick your butt out so no one wonders who you mean. j7

Write your confused and conflicted heart out to MS. BEHAVIOR at MsBehavior@aol.com.



Ms. Behavior

Estacada United Methodist Church Reconciling Congregation, where we really mean everyone is welcome. Sunday worship at 10:30 am. (204 SE Main St., Estacada. 503-349-4245.) (11/01)

First Congregational United Church of Christ is an open and affirming congregation in the liberal Christian tradition. Sunday worship is at 10:25 am, and church school for children runs concurrently. (1126 SW Park Ave. 503-228-7219.) (11/01)

First United Methodist Church of Portland, a welcoming and reconciling congregation, believes no one is left out in God's family. GLBT potlucks are held monthly. (10:30 am Sunday. 1838 SW Jefferson St. 503-228-3195. www.fumcpdx.org.) (11/01)

Full Circle Temple is a place of worship for women of all ages offering workshops, song and drum circles, meditation rooms and altars of celebration, incorporating what you bring to share. (10 am-10 pm Tuesday-Sunday. 3125 E Burnside St. 503-238-0675.) (11/01)

The God Connection Center for Worship, Growth and Leadership invites you to celebrate your spirituality with the Revs. Casey and Berdell Moffett-Chaney. Liberal, practical, all are welcome. (10 am Sunday. 4828 NE 33rd Ave. 503-481-7591.) (11/01)

Grace Space, a multidominational spiritual center led by the Rev. Stephanie Torres, holds Sunday evening celebrations. (5 pm. Friends of Multnomah, 4312 SE Stark St. 503-287-3216.) (11/01)

Integrity, the gay and lesbian ministry of the Episcopal Church, meets on the second Friday of each month in the Morrison Room at Trinity Cathedral. Eucharist is celebrated at 6:45 pm followed by a potluck and fellowship. (147 NW 19th Ave. 503-289-1687.) (11/01)

Interfaith Spiritual Center. Spiritual directors from various world religious traditions are available for guidance, classes and retreats. (Second Floor, 3910 SE 11th Ave. 503-233-2026, ext. 3. www.spiritone.com/~isc. (11/01)

welcome. (Suite 102, 3430 SE Belmont St. Mailing address: PO Box 9246, Portland, OR 97207. 503-736-3297. sistersp@teleport.com.) (11/01)

Southminster Presbyterian Church is a challenging, supportive community that welcomes all people. It is the first More Light Presbyterian Church in Oregon. (10 am Sunday summer, 9:30 and 11 am Sunday winter. 12250 SW Denney Road, Beaverton. 503-644-2073.) (11/01)

St. James Lutheran Church, a reconciled in Christ congregation, welcomes all people for traditional liturgical worship. (9 and 11 am Sunday. 1315 SW Park Ave. 503-227-2439.) (11/01)

St. Philip Neri Catholic Church offers a gay-positive community for Catholics and their friends. Mass at 7:30 pm Fridays followed by a social. (Paulist Center, 2408 SE 16th Ave. 503-231-4955.) (11/01)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church has been welcoming all people since 1863. (12-10 pm Wednesday and 7-45 and 10 am Sunday. Sunday school and child care at 10 am. SW 13th Avenue at Clay Street. 503-223-6424.) (11/01)

Unity Church of Portland is an all-inclusive community following Christ's teachings and celebrating diversity and truth without trappings for 75 years. Sunday school and child care available. Potluck first Sundays. (10 am Sunday. 4525 SE Stark St. 503-234-7441. unityprtind@wwdb.org.) (11/01)

University Park United Methodist Church is a member of the network of reconciling congregations and meets for worship at 10 am Sundays. (4775 N Lombard St. 503-289-7843.) (11/01)

Zion United Church of Christ, an open and affirming congregation, is open to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and heterosexual people who wish to worship in a Christ-centered, warm, caring, multiage/race/cultural faith community. (11 am Sunday. 2025 NE 23rd Ave., Gresham. 503-665-8741.) (11/01)

Wheelchair accessible. (10 am Sunday. 700 Marion St. NE, Salem. 503-363-3660.) (11/01)

Gay-Straight Alliance of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem meets for a potluck on the third Sunday of each month. (6 pm. 5090 Center St. NE. 503-363-8716.) (11/01)

Interfaith Spiritual Community meets for inspirational messages, children's celebrations and joy every Sunday at the Heart Center. We honor and celebrate all sacred paths, recognizing each person's divine gifts and supporting spiritual growth, healing and enlightenment. (6-7:30 pm. 1578 Commercial St. SE, Salem. 503-763-6030.) (11/01)

Morningside United Methodist Church is a reconciling congregation where everyone is welcome to participate in the full life of the congregation. (8:30 and 11 am Sunday. 3674 12th St. SE, Salem. 503-364-5013.) (11/01)

Sweet Spirit Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) holds worship at 11 am Sundays followed by coffee and fellowship as well as potluck lunches every second Sunday. (American Legion Hall, 4774 Lilac Lane NE, Salem. Mailing address: Pastor Ken Kerr, PO Box 12753, Salem, OR 97309. 503-315-7923.) (11/01)

YOUTH

Metro: Youth

Expression is a free art/expression support group for GLBT youth between 13 and 23 in Gresham. Hang out and have fun every Friday! Sponsored by Roots and Branches. (Jonathan 503-872-9664, ext. 28.) (11/01)

Outside In operates a clinic for anyone who can't qualify for the Oregon Health Plan as well as a needle exchange service that includes exchange for those who inject hormones. It also has some transitional housing for youth 20 and younger as well as for youth who are HIV-positive and younger than 23. It also plays host to **VOICES** (Voices of Individual and Community Empowerment from the Streets), a self-support group for queer youth. (10 am-6 pm Monday-Friday. 1236 SW Salmon St. 503-223-4121.) (11/01)

Pride Project brings together Washington County lesbian, gay, bi, trans and questioning youth to plan and attend monthly social events. Also information, referral, support and advocacy services for Washington County. (Molly 503-260-5792 molly@prideproject.org.) (11/01)

Rainbow is a multicultural peer support and activity group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans and questioning youth. (4:30 pm Wednesday. Metropolitan Community Church of Portland, 2400 NE Broadway. 503-281-8868.) (11/01)

Sexual Minority Youth Recreation Center (SMYRC) offers drop-in computer access, pool tables and an informal place to hang out and plays host to weekly youth support groups including Windfire, Trans Youth Group and Personal Deity Proxy (a creative group). (4-8 pm Monday and Wednesday, 4 pm-midnight Friday and Saturday. 2100 SE Belmont St. 503-872-9664. www.smyrc.org.) (11/01)

Youth HIV/STD Prevention Project provides fun and educational programs along with counseling and testing to queer youth in a friendly, relaxed environment. (503-872-9664.) (11/01)

YouthNet, a program of Love Makes a Family, offers tutoring and mentoring for lesbian, gay, bi and trans youth as well as for children of LGBT parents. (503-227-1981.) (11/01)

Southern Oregon: Youth

Southern Oregon Youth Outreach (SOYO), a group for gay, lesbian, and bi youth between 14 and 20, meets on the first and Thursdays of the month in Ashland. (541-488-6990.) (11/01)

Washington: Youth

Teen to Teen Sexual Minority Youth Program offers education, support and advocacy to gay, lesbian, bi and trans and questioning youth in Vancouver, Wash. Meets 6-8 pm Tuesdays and 3:30-5:30 pm Thursdays in Suite M100 at Cascade AIDS Project, 1104 Main St. (Amanda 360-693-1188.) (11/01)

Willamette Valley: Youth

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth Group for ages 13 to 18 offers support, information and fun. Free, confidential, drop-in. (4-6 pm Friday. Amazon Community Center, 2700 Hilyard St., Eugene. 541-684-3466.) (11/01)

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Youth Group for ages 25 and younger meets every Monday. (5 pm. Koinonia Center, 1414 Kincaid St., Eugene. 541-346-1134.) (11/01)

Rainbow Youth is a support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth and their friends between 13 and 17 years old in the Salem-Keizer area. (503-581-5535.) (11/01)



Photographer Steve Diet Goedde will sign his new book, *The Beauty of Fetish: Volume II*, which includes this image titled "Belle," 6-8 pm Aug. 10 at Counter Media

Compassionate Heart Sangha, a lesbian and gay meditation group, meets in the Buddhist Vipassana tradition. (7:30-9 pm Wednesday. Flanders House, 2926 NE Flanders St. Jon 503-239-5539.) (11/01)

Lincoln Street United Methodist Church is an open and accepting congregation of progressive Christians. (9 am Sunday. 5145 SE Lincoln St. 503-231-1930.) (11/01)

Metanoia Peace Community (United Methodist) is a "house church," bringing gay and straight together. (Daily prayer 7-20 am. Sunday gathering 6 pm. 2116 NE 18th Ave. 503-281-3697. www.tearsoup.com/metanoia.) (11/01)

Metropolitan Community Church of Portland holds ecumenical Sunday morning worship services at 9 and 11 am. Sunday school for children is held during the 11 am worship service. (2400 NE Broadway. 503-281-8868. info@mccportland.com.) (11/01)

Potter's House Ministries Life Center. Evangelical and charismatic Christian. (3830 SE 62nd Ave. 503-775-5024.) (11/01)

SisterSpirit offers women's spirituality celebrations, discussion groups, a drumming circle, workshops and classes. Schedule of events available. All women are

Washington: Spirituality

East Vancouver United Methodist Church. Reconciling, welcoming. (10 am Sunday. 5701 MacArthur Blvd. 360-693-4761. ourclarkcounty.columbian.com/273.) (11/01)

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. Two Sunday services, traditional and "less traditional" in an open and affirming congregation. (1220 NE 68th St., Vancouver. 360-693-1476.) (11/01)

Metropolitan Community Church of the Gentle Shepherd. (10 am Sunday. 913 W. 13th St., Vancouver. 360-695-1480.) (11/01)

Michael Servetus Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, a home for the liberal religious spirit. (10 am Sunday. 4505 E. 18th St., Vancouver. 360-695-1891.) (11/01)

Willamette Valley: Spirituality

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. is an open and affirming congregation offering worship and church school. Child care provided.